

does it in exemplary fashion, but she also helps the cloakroom staff in so many ways. She has been and is absolutely invaluable and irreplaceable. I also want to mention the garage attendants who are so friendly and helpful to all of us: Tommy, Dennis, Scotty and so many others are always there on the job and make our tour here safer and more enjoyable.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER JAMES E.  
HOFF

**HON. ROB PORTMAN**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Father James Hoff, a friend, educator and community leader, who will step down from his service as President of Xavier University on December 31, 2000.

Over the past ten years, Father Hoff has led Xavier to great new heights. In 1992, he began Xavier 2000 which led to the Century Campaign, the most ambitious fundraising campaign in the school's history, raising the endowment from \$24 million to \$89 million. He has also significantly strengthened the university's curriculum, advanced the quality of its faculty and created a more unified, attractive campus.

Perhaps most telling of Father Hoff's work is the success of Xavier's students. In the 1990's, the average high-school grade-point average of its incoming students rose from 2.9 to 3.49 for the current class. And, in 1998, the school ranked first in the nation for student-athlete graduation rates (100 percent).

In 1995, Xavier was recognized for the first time by U.S. News and World Report as one of "America's Best Colleges," placing fifteenth among Midwest schools. In its 2001 ranking, Xavier climbed to seventh among regional institutions in the Midwest. Xavier has also received recognition from Money magazine and the John Templeton Honor Roll.

Although Father Hoff surely deserves much of the credit, he is modest and quick to recognize Xavier's faculty and staff, Board of Trustees, administration and students—all of whom have helped to raise the level of excellence at the school.

He says his greatest accomplishment during his tenure is defining the school's mission: "to prepare students intellectually, morally and spiritually to take their places in a rapidly changing global society and to work for the betterment of that society." He certainly has done that, and all of us in the Cincinnati area thank him for his vision and goodwill. We look forward to his continued leadership in our area.

RECOGNITION OF THE RETIREMENT OF PAUL SELDENRIGHT

**HON. DAVID E. BONIOR**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a good friend of mine, Michigan State

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

AFL-CIO COPE Director Paul Seldenright upon his retirement. Paul Seldenright has been standing up for working men and women for over 40 years, beginning in 1960 as a steelworker in Trenton. Every day during that 40 years, the working families of Michigan have had a champion in Paul. The political battles Paul has fought in Lansing and in the State of Michigan have had a direct impact on the standard of living for the working people in our State.

Paul's interest in politics led him to the position of chairman of his local PAC in 1962. In 1973, after associating himself with several successful political campaigns in Michigan, he began working for the Michigan AFL-CIO. He is a member of the A. Philip Randolph Institute as well as the Coalition of Labor Union Women and a lifetime member of the NAACP.

I want it to be known that Paul Seldenright has dedicated his life to the betterment of the working men and women of the State of Michigan. While I know Paul's retirement is well-deserved, his passion for politics and his dedication to working families will not let retirement take him from the causes he believes in and has fought for all his life.

Please join me in honoring the career of one of Michigan's working heroes as Paul completes his final days as Michigan State AFL-CIO COPE Director. Paul, we wish you all the best.

THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

**HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 15, 2000*

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, in the closing days of the 106th Congress, I rise today to add perspective to the issue of the Armenian Genocide. Like many, I was deeply disappointed that the House did not consider H. Res. 596, the Armenian Genocide Resolution.

As my colleagues are well aware, the resolution was not considered because the Republic of Turkey decided to turn a sense of the House Resolution about the extensive U.S. record on the Armenian Genocide into a litmus test of its relationship with the United States. In an effort to stop the resolution, Turkey made repeated threats. In fact, many newspaper articles covering the progress of H. Res. 596 cited Turkey's numerous threats should this body move forward.

These threats were not only directed at the United States, but also at Armenia and Armenians living in Turkey. In Istanbul, Turkey, people threw rocks at the windows of the Armenian Church of Samatia, an Armenian priest was subjected to physical attacks, another priest was arrested for referencing the Armenian Genocide, True Path Party leader Tansu Ciller called for the deportation of 30,000 Armenians, military activities increased along the border, and this shocking list goes on.

I regret that the Republic of Turkey opted to use coercion to make its case. However, it is even more regrettable that the United States succumbed to such tactics. I believe that we

must remain vigilant in the face of threats and those who continue to deny the Armenian Genocide.

While the resolution was aborted in Congress, internationally the pace of Genocide affirmation continued. During November alone, despite Turkish threats, the European Parliament, along with France and Italy, all adopted resolutions affirming the Armenian Genocide. In addition, Pope John Paul II recognized the Armenian Genocide. Today I am submitting copies of these documents for the record.

Many experts have called for a dialogue between Turkey and Armenia on this subject. In fact, on October 3rd, the State Department offered to broker a dialogue between these two countries. While Armenia has repeatedly agreed, Turkey has refused. During his address at the Assembly of Turkish-American Associations in Washington, DC last month, Anthony Blinken, U.S. National Security Council European Director, indicated that Turkey had the responsibility to take the first step to start a dialogue with Armenia. Blinken said "as a small, landlocked country suffering from economic problems, Armenia sees Turkey as offering a fist, not a hand."

I agree with Mr. Blinken on this point. From Armenia's perspective, Turkey's ongoing hostile actions and continued violations of international human rights laws and treaties represent a significant security threat. Turkey's defense spending is the highest of any NATO country as a percentage of its Gross National Product (GNP) and over the next 25 years Turkey plans to spend \$150 billion modernizing its armed forces—against whom is unclear. Armenia simply does not have the resources to defend its own borders, especially given Turkey's military superiority and defense spending. Turkey's blockade, refusal to establish normal relations, military superiority, refusal to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide, and complete solidarity with Azerbaijan's demands regarding the Nagorno Karabagh conflict has only served to reinforce Armenia's view and has forced Armenia to rely on third parties to buttress its security capacity. As my colleagues know, Armenians faced genocide at the beginning of the 20th Century and the Armenians of Nagorno Karabagh suffered another attack during the end of the 20th Century. It is incumbent on us to ensure that Armenians and others around the world are not subjected to genocide in the 21st Century.

I would like to point out to my colleagues that since gaining its independence Armenia has consistently reached out and sought to normalize relations with Turkey only to be rebuffed at every step. Last year, when Turkey suffered a devastating earthquake, Armenia was one of the first countries to offer assistance. Armenia, having endured a major earthquake years before, has developed an expertise in earthquake response and recovery. Despite Armenia's offer, Turkey initially rejected assistance. In fact, it was reported that Turkey's Minister of Health, Osman Durmus, rejected offers of blood from Armenia because he didn't want Turkish blood mixed with theirs. More recently, Armenia offered earthquake assistance to Azerbaijan. To date, Azerbaijan

has not accepted Armenia's offer. Finally, Armenia's President, Robert Kocharian has proposed the creation of a regional security system that will facilitate long-term peace and regional cooperation. President Kocharian stated, "the creation of such a system will allow the states of the region to cast away the current concerns and to overcome the atmosphere of distrust. It will allow [the settlement of] the current conflicts, to avoid the emergence of new dividing lines, to establish long-term peace, and to think about prospects of development and [a] prosperous future." Turkey did not take President Kocharian up on his offer.

Time and time again, Armenia has shown its willingness to normalize relations with its neighbors. However, Armenia's offers have fallen on deaf ears. In my view, if Congress is unwilling to recognize and affirm the U.S. record in response to the Armenian Genocide, why would Turkey feel any obligation to enter into a dialogue with its weaker neighbor Armenia when it has successfully silenced the United States? It is my hope that we can continue to work on these important human rights issues during the 107th Congress and create an atmosphere in the Caucasus region whereby the security of all countries is not at issue and people can exchange views without the fear of retribution.

#### ITALIAN RESOLUTION

The Italian Chamber of Deputies has observed that on November 15, 2000 the European Parliament approved by a large majority a proposal deriving from the Periodic Review on the progress made by Turkey towards admission to the European Community, a review completed by the European Commission in 1999. The Turkish government has been encouraged to intensify its efforts towards democratization, especially in the fields of criminal law reform, independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression, and the rights of minorities.

The Italian Chamber of Deputies has also observed that the recent resolution deals with questions concerning the Armenian people in three paragraphs of particular significance: "we urge recognition of the genocide inflicted upon the Armenian minority [within the Ottoman Empire] committed before the creation of the modern Republic of Turkey (paragraph 10); improvement of relations with Turkey's neighbors in the Caucasus, as proposed by the Turkish government itself (paragraph 20); and, in support of the suggestion put forward in paragraph 21 by the Hon. D. Cohn-Bendit, President of the Bipartisan Parliamentary Commission on UE-Turkish relations, "invites the Turkish government to open negotiations with the Republic of Armenia, restore diplomatic relations and trade between the two countries, placing an end to the blockade currently in place."

The Chamber of Deputies therefore urges the Italian Government, in concordance with the proposals described above, to pursue energetically the easing of all tensions between peoples and minorities in that area, [i.e. the Caucasus], in order to create, with due observance of the territorial integrity of the two states, pacific coexistence and respect for human rights, thereby expediting a more rapid integration of Turkey within the European Community.

International Affirmation of the Armenian Genocide—Resolutions and Declarations—

Vatican City, November 10, 2000, Joint Communiqué of Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Karekin II

His Holiness Pope John Paul II, Bishop of Rome, and His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, give thanks to the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for enabling them to meet together on the occasion of the Jubilee of the Year 2000 and on the threshold of the 1700th anniversary of the proclamation of Christianity as the state religion of Armenia.

They also give thanks in the Holy Spirit that the fraternal relations between the See of Rome and the See of Etchmiadzin have further developed and deepened in recent years. This progress finds its expression in their present personal meeting and particularly in the gift of a relic of Saint Gregory the Illuminator, the holy missionary who converted the king of Armenia (301 A.D.) and established the line of Catholicos of the Armenian Church. The present meeting builds upon the previous encounters between Pope Paul VI and Catholicos Vasken I (1970) and upon the two meetings between Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Karekin I (1996 and 1999). Pope John Paul II and Catholicos Karekin II now continue to look forward to a possible meeting in Armenia. On the present occasion, they wish to state together the following.

Together we confess our faith in the Triune God and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, who became man for our salvation. We also believe in One, Catholic, Apostolic and Holy Church. The Church, as the Body of Christ, indeed, is one and unique. This is our common faith, based on the teachings of the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church. We acknowledge furthermore that both the Catholic Church and the Armenian Church have true sacraments, above all—by apostolic succession of bishops—the priesthood and the Eucharist. We continue to pray for full and visible communion between us. The liturgical celebration we preside over together, the sign of peace we exchange and the blessing we give together in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, testify that we are brothers in the episcopacy. Together we are jointly responsible for what is our common mission: to teach the apostolic faith and to witness to the love of Christ for all human beings, especially those living in difficult circumstances.

The Catholic Church and the Armenian Church share a long history of mutual respect, considering their various theological, liturgical and canonical traditions as complementary, rather than conflicting. Today, too, we have much to receive from one another. For the Armenian Church, the vast resources of Catholic learning can become a treasure and source of inspiration, through the exchange of scholars and students, through common translations and academic initiatives, through different forms of theological dialogue. Likewise for the Catholic Church, the steadfast, patient faith of a martyred nation like Armenia can become a source of spiritual strength, particularly through common prayer. It is our firm desire to see these many forms of mutual exchanged and rapprochement between us improved and intensified.

As we embark upon the third millennium, we look back on the past and forward to the future. As to the past, we thank God for the many blessings we have received from his infinite bounty, for the holy witness given by so many saints and martyrs, for the spiritual and cultural heritage bequeathed by our ancestors. Many times, however, both the

Catholic Church and the Armenian Church have lived through dark and difficult periods. Christian faith was contested by atheistic and materialistic ideologies; Christian witness was opposed by totalitarian and violent regimes; Christian love was suffocated by individualism and the pursuit of personal interest. Leaders of nations no longer feared God, nor did they feel ashamed before humankind. For both of us, the 20th century was marked by extreme violence. The Armenian genocide, which began the century, was a prologue to horrors that would follow. Two world wars, countless regional conflicts and deliberately organized campaigns of extermination took the lives of millions of faithful. Nevertheless, without diminishing the horror of these events and their consequences, there may be a kind of divine challenge in them, if in response Christians are persuaded to join together in deeper friendship in the cause of Christian truth and love.

We now look to the future with hope and confidence. At this juncture in history, we see new horizons for us Christians and for the world. Both in the East and West, after having experienced the deadly consequences of godless regimes and lifestyles, many people are yearning for the knowledge of truth and the way of salvation. Together, guided by charity and respect for freedom, we seek to answer their desire, so as to bring them to the sources of authentic life and true happiness. We seek the intercession of the Apostles Peter and Paul, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, of Saint Gregory the Illuminator and all Sainly Pastors of the Catholic Church and the Armenian Church, and pray the Lord to guide our communities so that, with one voice, we may give witness to the Lord and proclaim the truth of salvation. We also pray that around the world, wherever members of the Armenian and the Catholic Church live side by side, all ordained ministers, religious and faithful will "help to carry one another's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2). May they mutually sustain and assist one another, in full respect of their particular identities and ecclesiastical traditions, avoiding to prevail one over another: "so then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to everyone, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith" (Gal 6:10).

Finally, we seek the intercession of the Holy Mother of God for the sake of peace. May the Lord grant wisdom to the leaders of nations, so that justice and peace may prevail throughout the world. In these days in particular, we pray for peace in the Middle East. May all the children of Abraham grown in mutual respect and find appropriate ways for living peacefully together in this sacred part of the world.

#### 9. TURKEY'S PROGRESS TOWARDS ACCESSION

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION ON THE 1999 REGULAR REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION ON TURKEY'S PROGRESS TOWARDS ACCESSION (COM(1999) 513-C5-0036/2000-2000/2014(COS))

The European Parliament,

—having regard to Turkey's application for accession to the European Union,

—having regard to its resolution of 3 December 1998 on the European Strategy for Turkey,

—having regard to the 1999 Regular Report from the Commission on Turkey's progress towards accession (COM(1999) 513-C5-0036/2000),

—having regard to its resolution of 2 December 1999 on the implementation of measures to intensify the EC-Turkey customs union,

—having regard to Council Regulation (EC) No 764/2000 of 10 April 2000 regarding the implementation of measures to intensify the EC-Turkey Customs Union,

—having regard to its resolution of 6 September 2000 on measures to promote economic and social development in Turkey,

—having regard to its resolution of 7 September 2000 on the Turkish bombardment of northern Iraq,

—having regard to Rule 47(1) of the rules of Procedure,

—having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, Human Rights, Common Security and Defence Policy (A5-0297/2000),

A. recalling the decision taken on 13 December 1999 by the European Council meeting in Helsinki to grant Turkey the status of candidate country for accession to the European Union and to establish an accession partnership and a single financial framework with a view to helping Turkey's application to progress in accordance with the Copenhagen Criteria,

B. whereas, following the granting to Turkey of candidate country status, the Union must now, by common agreement with the Turkish Government, devise and implement in an appropriate manner a credible comprehensive strategy with a view to accession,

C. whereas accession negotiations cannot begin until Turkey complies with the Copenhagen criteria,

D. whereas a climate of mutual trust should be created between Turkey and the European Union so that Turkey does not perceive the Union as an "exclusive Christian club" but as a community of shared values which embrace, in particular, tolerance for other religions and cultures, and whereas no formal cultural or religious conditions are attached to accession to the European Union,

E. whereas a clear and detailed programme will be an effective encouragement to accelerate reform in favour of protection of human rights and democracy, and will greatly strengthen the hand of those in the Turkish government, parliament, and civil society institutions who are keen to establish full respect for basic rights in their country,

F. noting the legislative changes carried out along the path towards democratisation since the 1995 constitutional reform and the establishment in the Turkish Grand National Assembly of the Conciliation Committee, which is responsible for reforming the constitution,

G. welcoming the signature by Turkey on 15 August and 8 September 2000 of four important UN conventions, on political, civil, social and cultural rights respectively, which must be ratified as soon as possible so that human rights and democratic pluralism may be guaranteed in that country,

H. emphasising that, despite the progress already achieved along the path towards democratisation, human rights and the situation of minorities must continue to be improved by the implementation of those conventions,

I. whereas, according to Lord Russell-Johnston, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the confirmation by Ankara of the sentence imposed on former Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan is not in conformity with the principles of democratic pluralism,

J. whereas Resolution 1250 of the UN Security Council called on the Turkish and Greek Cypriot communities to begin negotiations in the autumn of 1999, and whereas no progress in that direction has been recorded,

despite the encouraging contacts made under the aegis of the UN Secretary-General in December 1999 and in January 2000; regretting, on the contrary, the violation of the military status quo by Turkish occupation forces in the village of Strovilia since 1 July 2000,

K. whereas the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in "Loizidou v. Turkey" (No 15318/89), handed down on 28 July 1998 and ruling in favour of the plaintiff, has still not been implemented,

L. whereas the election to the Presidency of the Republic of Mr. Sezer, who has demonstrated his commitment to the rule of law, will make it easier for the necessary reforms to be successfully completed,

M. noting Turkey's place in the economy of Europe—it had a GDP of USD 185 billion in 1999—and the links already established between Turkey and the European Union, with

N. whereas, in December 1999, the package of economic reforms demanded by the IMF with a view to introducing budgetary austerity and to curbing galloping inflation was approved by the Turkish Parliament,

O. encouraging the Turkish Government, on the one hand, to commit itself to carrying out structural reforms which, ranging from dismantling state subsidies to reorganizing pensions and accelerating privatisation, must therefore strengthen the bases of a free market economy accessible to all and, on the other, to continue its efforts to adopt Community legislation,

P. recognizing Turkey's important geostrategic position, having regard to its role within the Atlantic Alliance and its status of WEU associate member, but noting that geopolitical and strategic considerations must not be the decisive factors in negotiations about accession,

Q. welcoming the fact that Turkey has signalled its intention to commit military capabilities under the common European security and defense policy,

R. regretting and unequivocally condemning the recent incursion by the Turkish Air Force into Iraqi airspace when Kendakor was bombed on 15 August 2000,

S. endorsing the view set out in the Commission report that Turkey has undertaken a significant process of self-evaluation as regards the level of harmonisation of its legislation with the *acquis communautaire* and that it is the only candidate country to have joined the Customs Union,

T. welcoming the decision taken in this spirit on 5 July 2000 by the Turkish Parliament to include in the eighth five-year development plan the principles governing transposition of the *acquis communautaire* and to establish a Secretariat for the European Union responsible for coordinating the work required for such transposition,

U. emphasizing, however, that a sustained effort is still needed to push through the current reform of the Turkish Civil Code, with particular regard to parental and women's rights,

V. expressing its concern about the bill seeking to make it possible to dismiss civil servants on ideological or religious grounds,

I. Welcomes the resumption of institutional activities and political dialogue in the Association Council, which met on 11 April after being suspended for three years, and welcomes in particular the recent implementation of the Association Council's conclusions with the initiation of an analytical review of the *acquis communautaire* through the establishment of eight subcommittees entrusted with the task of setting priorities for incorporation of the *acquis*; notes with satisfaction that the first meetings of three

of those subcommittees have been successful and trusts that the remaining subcommittees' meetings will be held by the end of this year;

2. Encourages the Turkish Government to step up its efforts to achieve democratisation, with particular regard to reform of the Penal Code, independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression, the rights of minorities and the separation of powers, and especially the impact of the role of the army on Turkish political life;

3. Calls on the Turkish Government and Parliament to ratify and implement the UN conventions on political, civil, social and cultural rights which it signed recently;

4. Encourages in this respect the Turkish Parliament and Government to incorporate in the government programme the report drawn up by the Secretariat of the Turkish Supreme Coordination Council for Human Rights; welcomes the Turkish Council of Ministers' adoption of this report on 21 September 2000 as a "reference and working document"; and calls for the section on cultural rights to be reinserted into the report, with specific measures to protect the rights of minorities being added thereto;

5. Looks forward to the early abolition of the State Security Courts and welcomes the adoption of the law suspending the prosecution of, and penalties imposed on, press and broadcasting offences;

6. Calls, initially, for an amnesty with a view to achieving a reform of the Penal Code in the medium term so that it complies with the universal principle of freedom of expression;

7. Views the recent decision by the Constitutional Court on the law offering a reprieve to those who have committed press offences as a step that reinforces the rule of law; encourages the competent authorities to take this opportunity to continue their reforms in this direction, knowing that this process will logically lead them to a fundamental reconsideration of Article 312 of the Penal Code;

8. Calls, after the many promises made to this effect, for the death penalty to be abolished as soon as possible as part of the reform of the Penal Code and, pending such abolition, for the current moratorium on executions to be maintained;

9. Recalls the importance it attaches to recognition of the basic rights of the cultural, linguistic and religious groups in Turkey, who make up the country's multifaceted population;

10. Calls, therefore, on the Turkish Government and the Turkish Grand National Assembly to give fresh support to the Armenian minority, as an important part of Turkish society, in particular by public recognition of the genocide which that minority suffered before the establishment of the modern state of Turkey;

11. Notes the decisions taken on 30 November 1999 to lift the state of emergency in the Province of Siirt and on 26 June 2000 in the Province of Van, and calls on the Turkish Government to lift the state of emergency in the other provinces of the south-eastern region as well; calls for a specific solution to be found for the Kurdish people, encompassing the requisite political, economic and social responses;

12. Urges the Turkish Government genuinely to redirect its policy with a view to improving the human rights situation of all its citizens, including those belonging to groups whose roots go back deep into the country's past, by putting an end to the political, social and

13. Demands the release of Leyla Zana, winner of the European Parliament Sakharov Prize, and of the former MPs of Kurdish origin imprisoned because of the views they hold;

14. Welcomes the Turkish Government's adoption in September 2000 of an action plan which aims to restore economic balance with a view to resolving regional disparities by committing appropriate resources, and to promote the reopening of hamlets and the reconstruction of villages so that their inhabitants may return to them, together with other measures aimed at boosting investment in the south-east;

15. Welcomes the decisions taken by the Helsinki European Council to set up a single financial framework, based on an appropriate level of resources, and an accession partnership; calls on the Council and Commission to implement those two decisions as soon as possible and to reassess the amount of the European Union's financial assistance to Turkey, which should meet the needs of the pre-accession strategy on the basis of previous European Council conclusions with particular reference to the issue of human rights as well as the issues referred to in paragraphs 4 and 9(a) of the Helsinki conclusions;

16. Calls on the European Council, in accordance with the provisions of the European Union's political dialogue with the associated countries, to take note of the Turkish Government's request to be involved in one way or another in the process of developing the common foreign and security policy and welcomes Turkey's determination to contribute to improving European capabilities within the framework of the common European security and defence policy; considers that any such contribution has to be preceded by a clearly stated policy of respect for the territorial integrity of Member States;

17. Welcomes the start of negotiations on confidence-building measures agreed on 31 October 2000 by the foreign ministers of both Turkey and Greece;

18. Calls on the Turkish Government, in accordance with Resolution 1250 of the UN Security Council, to contribute towards the creation, without preconditions, of a climate conducive to negotiations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, with a view to reaching a negotiated, comprehensive, just and lasting settlement which complies with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the recommendations of the UN General Assembly, as reaffirmed by the European Council; hopes that this will be possible during the fifth round of proximity talks which will begin on 10 November 2000 and that those talks will result in bilateral negotiations, under the aegis of the UN, which will enable substantial progress to be made;

19. Calls on the Turkish Government to withdraw its occupation forces from northern Cyprus;

20. Calls on the Turkish Government, as it has proposed, to improve its relations with all its neighbours in the Caucasus within the framework of a Stability Pact for the region;

21. Calls in this connection on the Turkish Government to launch a dialogue with Armenia aimed in particular at re-establishing normal diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries and lifting the current blockade;

22. Calls on the Turkish Government, in cooperation with the Commission, to pursue its efforts with a view to enhancing the implementation of the pre-accession strategy

as regards the incorporation of the *acquis communautaire*, notably by improving the situation in fields such as the single market, agriculture, transport, the environment and administrative organisation;

23. Welcomes the Turkish Government's recent statement that the reform process, which covers the amendments to the Turkish Penal and Civil Codes, including parental and women's rights, would be stepped up during the coming year;

24. Calls on the Turkish Government to comply with previous and future decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and to consider the proposals made by the Council of Europe with regard to the training of judges and police officers;

25. Reminds Turkey also of the commitments it has given within the Council of Europe and calls on it to transpose Council of Europe instruments in particular so as to permit more effective monitoring of the application of political measures that are part of the accession partnership;

26. Takes the view that Turkey does not currently meet all the Copenhagen political criteria and reiterates its proposal for the setting up of discussion forums, consisting of eminent politicians from the European Union and Turkey as well as representatives of civil society, in order to promote political dialogue and help Turkey progress along the path towards accession; welcomes the initiative taken by the former President of Turkey, Mr. Demirel, to establish a Europe-Turkey Foundation, which might also be involved in those forums;

27. Calls on the Commission to devise and implement additional programmes in the field of education, given the exceptionally high proportion of the population (50%) under 25, in order to help foster understanding of the basic principles of the shared values of Europe;

28. Calls on the Council and the Commission to find ways to improve the effectiveness of MEDA Programmes for democracy in Turkey with a view to strengthening civil society there, consolidating the democratic system and supporting free and independent media in that country;

29. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and to the Turkish Government and Grand National Assembly.

#### CLEVELAND SCHOOL VOUCHER PROGRAM DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 15, 2000

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to offer for the record my congratulations to Judge Eric L. Clay of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit, an outstanding judge, and a man who possesses a high degree of common sense and pragmatism. Judge Eric L. Clay ruled that the Cleveland school voucher program was unconstitutional, because it did not present parents with a real set of options, and few non-religious private schools and no suburban public schools had opened their doors. He wrote, and I quote, "This scheme involves the grant of state aid directly and predominately to

the coffers of private, religious, schools, and it is unquestioned that these institutions incorporate religious concepts, motives, and themes into all facets of their educational planning." Judge Clay is a 1997 Clinton appointee.

Given the current national debate around school vouchers, his ruling is of critical importance to a full understanding of the issue. 82% of the citizens of Detroit recently held a referendum, and voted down the use of school vouchers. It is my firm belief all children should have the opportunity to attend first class public schools that have the highest academic standards, and the best learning environment possible. This can be best achieved by reducing class size, hiring more teachers, teaching phonics, implementing mentoring and after school academic enrichment programs, universal Head Start, increasing teacher's salaries, and creating a world class public school infrastructure. School vouchers is a panacea that will only benefit a small percentage of our kids, and therefore, should be discarded as a viable policy alternative once and for all.

#### A RULING VOIDS USE OF VOUCHERS IN OHIO SCHOOLS

[From the New York Times, Dec. 12, 2000]

By Jodi Wilgoren

A Federal Appeals court declared a Cleveland school voucher program unconstitutional yesterday, upholding a lower court ruling that the use of public money to send thousands of children to parochial schools breaches the First Amendment's separation of church and state.

The 2-to-1 decision, which included a vitriolic exchange among the judges, sets the stage for a United States Supreme Court showdown on one of the most contentious issues in education politics today. It comes a month after voters in Michigan and California roundly rejected school voucher programs in ballot initiatives and is the most significant legal decision yet on the question.

"We certainly hope everyone will get the message," said Robert H. Chanin, general counsel for the National Education Association, the nation's largest teacher's union, who argued the case for a group of parents and teachers challenging the vouchers. "The message is, let's focus on improving the public schools and stop playing around with vouchers as a panacea."

In the ruling, Judge Eric L. Clay of the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit said the Cleveland program did not present parents with a real set of options, because few nonreligious private schools and no suburban public schools had opened their doors. In 1999-2000, 96 percent of the 3,761 voucher students attended sectarian schools, receiving up to \$2,500 each to offset tuition.

"This scheme involves the grant of state aid directly and predominately to the coffers of private, religious

"There is no neutral aid when that aid principally flows to religious institutions," the decision said, "nor is there truly 'private choice' when the available choices resulting from the program are predominantly religious."

Voucher supporters promised to appeal the ruling and expressed confidence about their chances at the high court, which has hinted at its openness to vouchers in recent years with several 5-to-4 decisions allowing public money to be used in parochial schools for textbooks, transportation and teachers' aides.